

(31) war, now had only three—Russia, Germany, and Czechoslovakia.
 175 One aspect of her new position which represented an innovation was her transformation into a great maritime nation, thanks to the three ports, Stettin, Gdynia, and Danzig, and to her 312 miles of coast-line. Nevertheless, her destiny would henceforth be more closely bound to that of Central Europe, while remaining subordinate to the *entente* with Moscow.

666 The western frontiers were approved by the plebiscite of June 30, which covered not only the frontier-ratification, but also the abolition of the Senate and the economic organisation of the State (Agrarian reform and nationalisation of key industries).
 • [47] The first ballot gave 10,534,697 in favour and 995,584 against;
 [423] the second gave 7,844,522 in favour and 3,686,029 against; the third, 8,896,106 in favour and 2,634,446 against.

578 This popular referendum did not have the tranquillising
 648 effects that had seemingly been expected. Poland continued to
 661 be a prey to 'terrorist' agitation, the repression of which, in
 175 turn, gave rise to scenes of violence and to exactions. While dissociating himself from the extremists, the leader of the Polish Peasant Party, M. Mikolajczyk, himself protested against the way in which the referendum had been carried out (except in Cracow, where the 'Noes' had been in the majority). So the British Government reserved its opinion on the legitimacy which this poll conferred on the régime, and awaited the general elections before giving legal recognition to the new state of affairs. And the whole of 1946 was taken up with exchanges of subacid notes between London and Washington on the one side and Warsaw on the other. The Anglo-Americans denounced the persecution to which the Opposition was subjected, and considered that the Polish Government was failing in the undertaking given in execution of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements, to guarantee the liberty of elections. But the Russians interpreted quite differently both the scope of these agreements and the meaning of the word 'liberty'. And so the most obvious result of the diplomatic offensive on the part of England and the United States was to intensify Polish-Sovietic solidarity.

648 The formation, in June, of a National Unity Government
 175 under the Presidency of M. Osobka Morawski seemed, for the
 [642] time being, to dissipate the apprehensions of the Anglo-Americans, although the dissident Polish Government in London

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concerned, and executive agents for Prague for Czechoslovak affairs. This was the solution found for the dualism previously existing in Czechoslovakia. 642
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In virtue of this system the Slovaks have institutions which enable them to settle their own problems, while at the same time participating in the general control of the country. Hence the current joke about the 'Slovakisation of Czechoslovakia'.

Thus did President Benes succeed in adapting the spiritual heritage of Masaryk, and his own tendencies, to an internal and external situation very different from that which, in 1918, had shaped the rebirth of the Czech nation. And yet Benes took pains to safeguard signs of independence, and to maintain bonds of spiritual solidarity with the West, in order to attest his faith in his country's mission as a mediatrix, her role as a stabilising factor between the East and the West of the Continent. But the new Czechoslovakia no longer reflected the image that Masaryk had popularised—that of a European Slavism formed in the school of the Liberal Democracies. [186]
[829]

The first elections carried out after the liberation—those of May 26, 1946—gave a slight majority to the Marxists, who had 153 seats out of the 300 of which the National Assembly was composed. 666
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This shift in the majority had little practical effect. The internal policy, based on nationalisation,¹⁹ and the realisation of a very advanced social programme, underwent the fewer modifications, inasmuch as the Communists, anticipating their electoral victory, had already secured possession of the principal control levers.

¹⁹ The results were as follows:—

BOHEMIA-MORAVIA				Votes	Percentage
Communists	...	...	...	2,205,658	40.17
National-Socialists	...	...	...	1,298,967	23.66
Populists	...	...	...	1,010,920	20.23
Social-Democrats	...	...	...	855,771	15.59
SLOVAKIA					
Democrats (Christian)	...	...	...	988,275	61.43
Communists	...	...	...	490,257	30.48
Liberty Party	...	...	...	67,575	4.20
Labour Party	...	...	...	49,983	3.11

As will be seen, the majority was reversed in Bohemia and in Slovakia. 471 •
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²⁰ The nationalisation programme which took effect on March 13, 1946, placed the majority of the key-industries under State control. Commenting on this event, the Minister of Industry declared: 'This day marks a date in the history of the world's industry'.